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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2456

April 13, 1990

USDA TO TACKLE SHUTTLE WASP PROBLEM -- The shuttle launch pads at the Kennedy Space Center have become a lover's lane for wasps, who fly to the tops of the launch pads to mate & overwinter. National Aeronautics & Space Administration officials, concerned for employee safety & the sensitive shuttle equipment, have turned to USDA Entomologist Peter J. Landolt to find a less drastic means of control than a shuttle lift-off. Developing a wasp trap & lure will take several years of research. "We want to develop a bait-trap system that will keep the wasps off the shuttle," Landolt says. When Landolt completes the system, he's got other customers waiting in the wings -- Disney World & two tourist towers in Florida -- who also have wasp problems. Contact: John Svinski (904) 374-5771.

FIRST GROUNDWATER POLLUTION PROJECT -- The Midwest Corn Belt will be the first testing area for USDA's new program to protect groundwater from contamination by fertilizers & pesticides. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter says a scientific panel recommended funding five projects that include various combinations of climate, soils & aquifers. The work will be done on farm land overlying aquifers in: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Ohio & Wisconsin. Research is scheduled to begin this summer. Contact: C. Richard Amerman (301) 344-3059.

GROWING POPCORN IN THE HOME GARDEN is easy & fun, says Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service Horticulturist Tom Koske. Popcorn is a long-season crop grown in about four months, just like sweet corn. Koske has other tips for popcorn culture. Contact: Thomas Koske (504) 388-4141.

LONGER LASTING FRUITS & VEGGIES -- A USDA chemist has developed an edible, inexpensive film that is easy to apply to fresh fruit & vegetables to retard ripening. "The coating extends the shelf life of produce without harming quality," says USDA Chemist Myrna Nisperos-Carriedo. The coating is made from oils or waxes & cellulose. After 14 days of storage, only 40 percent of tomatoes treated with the film began ripening, compared to nearly 100 percent of untreated tomatoes, she said. Contact: Myrna O. Nisperos-Carriedo (813) 293-4133.

USDA INCREASES GRADING FEES -- Beginning May 1, USDA will increase fees for certain grading & inspection of eggs, poultry & rabbits. "Increases in the salaries and fringe benefits of federal employees and of federally-licensed state employees providing the services justify raising the fees," says Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. Contact: Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179.

NEW DIRECTORY -- Just out -- the "1990 Directory of Public Information Contacts, Washington, D.C." It has phone numbers and addresses of all federal agencies. Free copies are available to members of the press, government public affairs offices and others in public affairs and public relations. Request copies on letterhead from: Martin Marietta Corp., Attn: Public Relations, 6801 Rockledge Dr., Bethesda, Md. 20817.

VITAMIN C & COPPER -- Vitamin C & adequate supplies of copper may have the potential to fight some cancers in the human body, says Ed Harris, professor of biochemistry with the Texas Ag Experiment Station & Texas A&M Univ. Harris, who has spent years studying the function of trace minerals in mammals, says there is considerable interest in the interaction of vitamin C & cancer cells. The vitamin seems to hinder the growth of two types of cancer, he says. Contact: Ag Communications (409) 845-2516.

PORK PLATE APPEAL -- Japan's growing appetite for processed pork products can help U.S. exporters bring home the bacon, says the April issue of AgExporter magazine. The Japanese market for processed pork products was estimated at more than 582,000 metric tons in 1988 -- a 22 percent increase over 1983. Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 382-9442.



RON HENDREN, WTAD, Quincy, Ill., (left) and Jim Coyle, KREN, Moberly, Mo., (right) accompanied 70 members of the Missouri Farm Bureau during a recent legislative visit to the Nation's Capital. USDA Radio Chief Vic Powell gave the two farm broadcasters a tour of USDA broadcast facilities.

100 YEARS OF OKLAHOMA AG -- Oklahoma State University has produced a 16-minute VHS videotape, "100 Years of Oklahoma Agriculture," that covers the beginning of ag in Oklahoma to modern times. Copies are available for \$30 each from: Educational Materials Group, Ag Communications, OSU, Stillwater, Okla. 74078. Contact: Gene Allen (405) 744-3625.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1714 -- Adequate health care is hard to find in many rural areas. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Brenda Curtis travels to a small western New York village where a community rallied to save its local hospital. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1196 -- Diminishing rural health care; poultry picks up popularity; solar cooking; writing a legal will; cleaning up chemical contamination. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1703 -- USDA News Highlights; 1985 Farm Bill was a success; pesticide & fuel cleanup; bug suckers; diminishing rural health care. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1315 -- Varroa mite control; unsuspected salmonella source; fly attacks corn earworm; allelopathic rice; high protein plant extract. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., April 23, rice outlook, U.S. trade update, catfish; Tues., April 24, weekly weather & crop update; Wed., April 25, poultry production; Thurs., April 26, oil crops outlook, world tobacco situation.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE
April 12, 1990

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on an Earth Day technology fair; Lynn Wyvill reports on a Forest Service research project on global change; Will Pemble reports on ag research to produce leaner lamb; Lisa Telder reports on Michigan State University's biomechanics evaluation lab; and Gary Beaumont has a story on increasing sheep numbers in the Midwest.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA Assistant Secretary Catherine Bertini on the minimum wage & food stamps; Norton Strommen with a weather update; & USDA World Board Chairman Jim Donald on corn & soybean demand & 1990 meat production.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Farming with LISA; preventing foodborne illness; credit card privacy; Georgia chicken wings.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFFMIKE

GOOD CROP...and good prices produce a positive attitude, says Cyndi Young (Oklahoma Agrinet, Oklahoma City). Ground moisture situation is in good shape, and recent freezing temperatures did not produce widespread damage of the wheat crop. Cyndi says cattle prices are up, feed lots are current, and the outlook is good this spring.

AG OLYMPICS...planning is underway, says Don Wick (KWOA, Worthington, Minn.). Second annual one-day event on May 6 is held for members of FFA chapters in the tri-state region of Minnesota, Iowa and South Dakota. KWOA conducts an ag knowledge bowl and outdoor events. A traveling trophy is awarded to best chapter, as well as plaques and T-shirts to individual and team winners. Don says improved moisture conditions are allowing producers to plant small grains, but soil temperatures need to increase to plant corn. That's expected later this month.

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Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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CONGRATULATIONS...to Mike Wiles (KTTS, Springfield, Mo.). Mid-America Dairymen presented Mike its Salute Award, honoring his outstanding contributions to agricultural communication. Also, this year is Mike's 10th anniversary as farm director at the station. Thanks to Forrest Bradley of Mid-AM for telling us.

AG COMMITTEE...of the Bismarck Chamber of Commerce is discussing buying copies of USDA's "America's Most Crucial Industry." Al Gustin (KFYR-TV, Bismarck, N.D.), a member of the committee, saw it on our recent satellite transmission and thought it would be perfect for distribution in the city's school system. Al says the 15-minute program is a good vehicle for informing people about American agriculture.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division